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New Frontiers in Space Law (Ed. By McWhinney)

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BOOK REVIEWS

NEW FRONTIERS IN SPACE LAW, edited by Edward McWhinney and Martin A. Bradley. A. W. Sijthoff, Leyden and Oceana Publications, Inc., 1969, pp. 134. \$5.50

There have been volumes published on some aspect of space law in increasing numbers for almost two decades. What makes this book particularly meaningful, aside from academic content, is its timing. While growing out of a conference held at McGill's Institute of Air and Space Law in Montreal on October 21 and 22, 1968, its publication date of January 20, 1969, marks it as the first treatise on space law to be published after man (and mankind) had made his first step on the surface of the moon. Moreover, the general theme of the "mini-conference" was most appropriate, "After the Moon Treaty: New Frontiers in International Cooperation in Space Law."

Space law, an ethereal and exotic subject to many lawyers, (some of whom may still find international law somewhat of a novelty) can no longer be so classified. In fact some of the topics are clearly pragmatic, e.g., limitation of liability in the event of damage caused by a space object; the rescue of astronauts and return of space objects; and registration of spacecraft.

Among the notables at the conference whose working papers after being revised and re-written, constitute the bulk of *New Frontiers in Space Law* are Dr. D. Goedhuis of The Hague; Dr. A. A. Cocca of Buenos Aires; Dr. V. Kopoe of Prague; Dr. M. M. Bourelly, Dr. Eugene Pepin, and Mr. J. L. Vencatassin of Paris; and Dr. I. H. Ph. Diederiks-Verschoor of Utrecht; Mr. Martin A. Bradley of the Institute; Mr. Paul G. Dembling, NASA General Counsel of Washington, D.C.; Judge Manfred Lachs of the World Court at The Hague and of Warsaw; Dr. G. P. Zhukov of Moscow; and Mr. Edward McWhinney of Montreal, Director of the Institute.

The reader can discern from such a list that the book could just as easily have been published under the auspices of the United Nations. In this vein, the article by Dr. Cocca which is devoted to an exposition of the Latin American viewpoint of the fundamental principles of space law and that of Dr. Zhukov as to the Russian viewpoint of the development of space law, afford valuable insight into the varying juridical approaches to the subject.

While the theme of the conference does not pervade the collection of articles which constitute the book with equal force, the material does center around three basic documents in space law:

- (1) The Declaration of Legal Principles on Outer Space of 1963;
- (2) The Treaty on Principles Governing Activities of States in the Explora-

tion and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies of 1967;

- (3) The Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, Return of Astronauts and Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space of 1968.

The compendium is not only a welcome addition to the space law reference library, but also an excellent basic reader for the practitioner who can no longer afford to consider the moon and other celestial bodies as "moot points."

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